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Summary record of the 13th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 26 October 2004, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. MacKay ..... (New Zealand)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

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Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*) (A/C.5/59/L.4)

Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.4

1. *Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.4 was adopted without a vote.*

2. **Mr. Jonah** (Sierra Leone) said that the Sierra Leonean people were very grateful for the efforts made both by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone in general, and by the various contingents. There were many reconstruction projects to which the contingents were making a considerable contribution, thereby helping to project a very positive image of the United Nations. The phased reduction in the staff of the Mission would enable the Sierra Leonean Government progressively to take over responsibility for peacekeeping and security. In conclusion, he thanked the African Group for its support.

3. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 136.

Agenda item 153: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (*continued*) (A/C.5/59/L.6)

4. *Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.6 was adopted without a vote.*

5. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 153.

Agenda item 154: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (*continued*) (A/C.5/59/L.7)

Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.7

6. *Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.7 was adopted without a vote.*

7. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 154.

Agenda item 155: Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (*continued*) (A/C.5/59/L.5)

Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.5

8. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), with reference to paragraphs 13 and 14 of the draft resolution, said that, in the budget performance report of the Mission for the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005, which would be submitted to the General Assembly at its resumed sixtieth session, the wording of expected accomplishment 2.3 given in document A/59/288 would be replaced by the words "carrying out free and fair elections".

9. **Ms. Goicochea** (Cuba) said that her delegation had decided to approve draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.5 and to join the consensus on the understanding that expected accomplishment 2.3 would be rephrased as indicated by the Controller. However, she emphasized the exceptional nature of her delegation's agreement and recalled that it was for the Fifth Committee to approve the expected accomplishments and the indicators of achievement. She therefore attached particular importance to the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution which stressed the role of the Committee in the consideration and approval of budgetary proposals.

10. *Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.5 was adopted without a vote.*

11. **Mr. Mérorès** (Haiti) thanked the African Group for its support. He welcomed the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.5 at a time when the situation of the country required the deployment of the Mission's full resources. The resolution in question should enable Haiti to regain peace and the rule of law and promote its socio-economic development. It should also enable the Mission fully to carry out its mandate bearing in mind, in particular, the budgetary funds of some $379 million which were to be allocated for the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005.

12. **Mr. Alarcón** (Costa Rica), endorsing in general the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) in its reports on budget proposals for peacekeeping operations, said that the justifications provided for the creation of certain posts were often inadequate and asked the Secretariat to justify the posts again when preparing forthcoming budget proposals.

He also drew attention to the need to improve job descriptions by taking into account the characteristics of each mission in order to enhance transparency and a sense of responsibility.

13. **Mr. Sun** Yudong (China), referring to paragraph 11 of the ACABQ report (A/59/390), noted that a saving of $2,270,000 could be achieved by reducing expenditures on rations. He asked for the inclusion in the performance report of the necessary details to enable the Member States to satisfy themselves that the anticipated saving had actually been made. His delegation also emphasized that the sum of $9 million allocated to the Mission to offset the impact of Hurricane Jeanne must be used only for the stated purpose.

14. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 155.

Agenda item 129: Financing of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.8

15. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), referring to paragraph 12 of draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.8, said that in the performance report for the period from July 2004 to June 2005, which would be submitted to the General Assembly at its resumed sixtieth session, indicator of achievement 1.3.3 given in document A/59/290 would be reworded by the Secretariat to read: "Timorese courts will by May 2005 decide on all arrest warrants that have been filed".

16. **Ms. Wahab** (Indonesia) said that since the adoption of resolution 1410 (2002) by which the Security Council established the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, Indonesia had always supported the Mission, in particular by approving resolution 1543 (2004) by which the Council extended its mandate for a period of six months, with a view to subsequently extending the mandate for a further and final period of six months until 20 May 2005. However, in view of the progress achieved, she considered that it was important that the Mission should complete its mandate on the scheduled date.

17. Indonesia noted the efforts made by the Secretary-General to submit peacekeeping budgets using the results-based methodology. She emphasized in that connection that, in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 57/290 B, the specific characteristics and mandates of each peacekeeping mission must be fully taken into account. As her delegation had said in the informal consultations, indicator of achievement 1.3.3 given in document A/59/290 was not in accordance with the mandate of the Mission. Her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution on the understanding that the indicator of achievement in question would be reworded as indicated by the Controller.

18. **Mr. Begg** (New Zealand), supported by **Mr. Dutton** (Australia), said that his country was strongly convinced that human rights violations and serious crimes which had been perpetrated in East Timor in 1999 should not remain unpunished and that the perpetrators should be brought to justice. In its resolution 1543 (2004), the Security Council had reaffirmed the need to fight against impunity and the importance for the international community to lend its support in that regard and emphasized that the Serious Crime Unit should complete its investigations by November 2004. In order for the Serious Crime Unit to complete its work, it was essential that decisions should be taken concerning all unexecuted arrest warrants. New Zealand considered that the indicators of achievement given in document A/59/290 fell within the mandate of the Serious Crime Unit and that they were appropriate criteria for evaluation of the achievements of the Mission. The New Zealand delegation took it that the document symbol appearing in footnote 3 to the final preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.8 (A/C.5/59/SR.13) was a reference to the summary record of the current meeting and it therefore expected its views to be reflected in the record.

19. *Draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.8 was adopted without a vote.*

20. **Mr. Guterres** (Timor-Leste) conveyed his sincere gratitude to the Member States saying that the Timorese Government was determined to collaborate with Indonesia, a neighbouring and friendly country, and with the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to finding a solution to the pending problems in a manner acceptable to Timor-Leste, to Indonesia and to the international community. He added that, despite the progress made, much remained to be done in Timor-Leste which would continue to need the support of the international community after the departure of the Mission of Support in May 2005, in particular in the areas of justice and the police, and in the financial sector.

21. **The Chairman** said that the Committee has concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 123: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Draft decision A.C.5/59/L.9

22. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that the five budget proposals that the Committee had just considered had not been foreseen and had had to be prepared following the decisions taken by the Security Council in 2004. Those budgets would give rise to the preparation of reports to be submitted to the resumed session of the Committee in May 2005 when it would examine the budget proposals for peacekeeping operations for the period 2005/06. The Secretariat would not be able to begin preparation of budget proposals for the five operations for 2005/06 until the General Assembly had completed consideration of their budgets during the current session. The Secretariat was currently preparing budget proposals for all the peacekeeping operations for the period 2005/06, as well as the budget performance reports for the period 2003/04, some 45 reports in all. The workload was already unmanageable and, while the Secretariat would do its best to grant the request of the General Assembly, it was unsure whether it could produce the report requested in the draft decision in time for the resumed session in May 2005.

23. **Mr. Begg** (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey), the stabilization and association process countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Iceland and Norway (members of the European Free Trade Association) and the members of the European Economic Area, supported by **Ms. Attwooll** (United States of America) and **Ms. Ferguson** (Canada), said that, by approving the budgets before it, the Committee had given the Secretariat and each peacekeeping operation the financial and human resources and the flexibility it needed to carry out its mandate fully and efficiently. He trusted that the Secretary-General, when filling the posts approved, would bear in mind the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the views of the Member States.

24. The European Union placed great confidence in the Advisory Committee and would continue to use the latter's comments and recommendations in its discussions and decisions on the budgets for peacekeeping operations. It therefore expected that the utmost budgetary rigour would be applied to the use of the $9.3 million allocated to MINUSTAH for remediation of the effects of hurricane Jeanne and that a detailed account of the disbursement of those funds would be given in the next budget performance report for the Mission.

25. The European Union had already expressed concern at the way in which the "template" had been implemented in the most recently established peacekeeping operations. While, in principle, it supported such a template, it fully agreed with the statements of the African Group and the comments of the Advisory Committee that the template must be applied in a very flexible manner. The use of the template must not lead to lax budgeting procedures or to arbitrary inflation in the grading of posts, and the Secretary-General must be able to justify fully all positions, especially those at senior levels, within each operation. In that context, the coordination of their activities with those of other United Nations humanitarian actors in the field was essential to the efficient and cost-effective discharge of the operations' mandates. The European Union would closely pursue the matter at the resumed session in May 2005 when the budgets for all peacekeeping operations and the cross-cutting resolution would be discussed.

26. The European Union looked forward to the outcome of the reviews of the staffing and structure of new missions and the management structures of existing missions. While it understood the additional burden of work that could mean for the Secretariat, it did not consider the timing to be too onerous. The Secretariat should be able to review and justify the resource requirements of all peacekeeping operations throughout the budgeting process, and the General Assembly's request should simply be an extrapolation of that ongoing review process.

27. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan), supporting the statement made by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union, said that his delegation would continue to follow closely the budget performance reports and future budget proposals for peacekeeping operations.

28. *Decision A/C.5/59/L.9 was adopted without a vote.*

29. **Ms. Lock** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the African Group, in explanation of the Group's position after the adoption of draft resolutions A/C.5/59/L.5, L.6 and L.7, supported by **Mr. Renault** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Latin American troop-contributing countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Peru), said that the African Group had joined the consensus on the understanding that the Committee's decisions would provide for the necessary needs of those peacekeeping operations.

30. The African Group, however, wished to reaffirm the principle that each peacekeeping budget submission should be considered on the basis of the financial justifications contained therein and of the complexities, mandates and specificities of each operation and the environment in which it functioned. It was on that basis that the Group had agreed to the review called for in the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/59/L.9.

31. Concerning the broad model applied by the Secretariat to determine the type of structure required by the multidimensional nature of the peacekeeping operations, the Group considered it imperative that the Secretariat should apply the model in a flexible manner that reflected the complexities and mandates of each mission.

32. Furthermore, in order to facilitate the decision-making process and clarify the Advisory Committee's recommendations on each operation, the Group expected the Advisory Committee to consider the budget estimates and staffing structure on a case-by-case basis and provide the Committee with a detailed explanation of its advice and avoid cross-cutting to the extent possible. Member States must receive assurances that reductions were proposed after careful consideration of the needs specific to each operation.

33. The African Group was confident that the Committee would be able to reach an early resolution of those matters during its resumed session in May 2005 if the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee paid heed to its observations.

34. **The Chairman** announced that the Committee had concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Organization of work

35. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that he had received a request from Ms. Waters, President of the United Nations Staff Union, to address the Committee on agenda items 114 and 116, entitled respectively "Human resources management", and "The United Nations common system", in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/213. He had also received a request from Mr. Weissel, President of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA), to address the Committee on agenda item 116. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to hear the President of the Staff Union and the President of FICSA.

36. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.